

A New Look at Stewardship, the Currency of Relationship

We'd like to introduce you to the Currency of Relationship, the core of the Stewardship365 program. The fundamental belief that we are connected to God through Jesus is the reason why we need to pay attention to and develop relationships as a currency of exchange. When we make real connections, both within CTK and local ELCA churches (internal) and the community and other faith churches (external), we create a network of relationships that are the foundation of a sustainable ministry that is relationship, not task driven.



If we are to fulfill Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves we must learn how to connect and develop constructive relationships within the Tri-City community to include racial/cultural/ethnic groups, community and civic organizations/leaders, local businesses, ecumenical/interfaith partners, plus people in need and those with resources.

“A relationship driven ministry focuses on listening. Building relationships is not a linear process, but a circular or spiral one, in which we encounter another person at least a few times. Each time we get to know a little more about another person as we listen to his/her story. Each time we encounter each other, we build a little more trust.”

Being an effective listener is an essential skill needed to create new or strengthen existing internal and external relationships. The goal is to gather information that will allow us to know what is important to others, their truth which is one of the other Holy Currencies. For many, this skill needs to be developed.

The below process is one that you can practice while communicating with fellow CTK members and others you talk to.

1. Create formal and informal opportunities for interpersonal conversations
 - ➔ Be prepared to engage in meaningful dialog
2. Start or strengthen a relationship
 - ➔ Pay attention
3. Be curious and discover the person's self-interest
 - ➔ Listen without judgement
4. Help the person clarify/discover his/her self-interest
 - ➔ Say tell me more or ask clarifying questions such as:
 - Why do you think...?
 - What do you need...?
 - How would you...?
 - If you could, would you like to...?
5. Let the person know that you are listening
 - ➔ Provide feedback such as:
 - I hear that you said...
 - It seems important to you that...
6. Gather information and if appropriate, note for future reference

Remember: If you had a boring conversation, it's probably not because your partner has nothing to say. But you might not have asked the right questions. Wishing you lots of exciting conversations, the Stewardship Team!